

Countering International Terrorism by Military Force

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Conference is taking place at a very responsible time with regard to the evolution of world affairs. An intensive search for effective ways to strengthen international security and maintain stability under the conditions of the emergence of new threats to the world community is underway. First of all, the issue deals with international terrorism, national extremism, illegal arms trade and drug trafficking, which have interdependent, multinational nature.

The destabilizing impact of those factors emphasized by globalization demands of us that we should immediately revise our approaches to ensuring security, strengthening solidarity and mutual support.

The tragic events of the past year in the US serve horrible evidence to the fact of how vulnerable the civilized world is in the face of globalizing challenges and threats. These acts of terror have graphically revealed the imperfection of today's world order and necessity for its modernizing.

In their style and impact on public consciousness the terrorist attacks in the US are close to the blow up of the apartment houses in Russia in 1999. The similarity in terrorists' "signature" is obvious, despite the fact that different technical means were used in the terrorist attacks in the US and Russia. The analysis of terrorists' actions shows that, as a rule, they do not burden themselves with inventing any special delivery systems to bring weapons of terror to the spot. Rather, they employ the means that can easily be accessed and used in everyday life. Those are cars or suicide terrorists in Russia and Israel, planes in the United States. Any delay on the part of the world community in taking preventive measures against terror may result in even more horrible consequences. Special danger can be posed by threats to attack nuclear installations, nuclear power plants and attempts to seize various WMD munitions, detonation of high yield bombs at public places, demolition of dams and other actions which can lead to environmental disasters.

Today, there are numerous terrorist training camps and centers, where they improve their skills in exercising terrorist attacks. Following such transitional training the "graduates" are illegally moved to so-called "hot spots". As you might know, in Russia it is North Caucasus.

At the present time, the joint federal task force delivers tangible strikes at terrorist bases both in the mountainous part of the Republic and in its plains. The terrorists, who at some point set up a criminal "labor exchange" in the territory of Chechnya, have less and less chances to survive let alone profit on the blood of innocent people. The tactics of terrorist groups' operations has changed of late. Besides traditional firing at the federal forces, laying mines and attacks on small units, in the summer of 2001 they launched in the Republic a continuous campaign of assassinations of local authorities' representatives. Terrorist ringleaders, realizing that the evolution vector of internal political situation in Chechnya is gradually turning towards peace, have unleashed massed terror against administration heads in villages

and towns, the people who have been broadly cooperating with the federal center in the attempts to stabilize the situation and restore normal life of the population in the Republic. The objective of the terrorists is crystal clear, it is to intimidate the peaceful population of Chechnya and delay the process of final stabilization of the situation in the region. I'll give you some examples: deputy head of administration in the town of Shali has been assassinated; administration head and chief of local interior ministry branch have been killed in Kurchaloi; there has been an assassination attempt on the life of Ruslan Yamadaev, deputy military commandant of the Republic. It was found out and confirmed by documents that dozens of assassinations were executed by terrorists disguised as Russian federal servicemen.

We have long been aware of the fact that international terrorists are fighting on the side of Chechen militants; there is irrefutable evidence to that effect.

Recently, a video film, found in Afghanistan, was made public featuring a meeting of one of Chechen ringleaders Khattab and terrorist ¹ 1 Usama bin Laden. This fact once again clearly supports the statement by Russia saying that international terrorism in Chechnya has been backed from abroad.

Throughout the past year Russian border guards had multiple engagements with militants attempting to cross the North Caucasian part of the Russian border. More than twenty militants were killed in the engagements half of whom appeared to be foreign mercenaries. Overall, in 2001 border guards detained more than 400 people who tried under various pretext to penetrate into the Russian territory in order to participate in the terrorist activities. About a hundred of them were arrested in the North Caucasian region.

Another example: According to the information we received in the early January from Azerbaijan, a trial over twelve Azerbaijanis having participated in fighting in Chechnya had finished in Baku. The investigation found out that the group had illegally crossed into the territory of Georgia where the militants had been stationed at a military camp surrounded with a high fence. Dressed in military uniform the mercenaries took a course in marksmanship, topography and demining to be subsequently prepared for, speaking in their language, "waging holy jihad against the Russians". We are grateful to the Azerbaijani justice for bringing in a fair verdict. At the same time it is not the only case of the kind.

It should be pointed out that the Chechen militants have built kind of a "hornets' nest" in the territory of the Pankissi gorge in Georgia. Till now, unfortunately, the gorge has not been put under the control of Tbilisi and remains to be the source of criminal activities. Under the disguise of refugees Chechen terrorists infiltrate into the Pankissi area. According to our estimates there are about 150 of them there now. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the majority of the local population is made up of ethnic Kistin-Chechens who are Moslems and many of whom openly declare their adherence to wakhabism, while surrounding villages are populated by Georgian Christians. According to our assessment the situation in the Pankissi gorge remains to be explosive, so an ethnic conflict may flare up there at any moment. The Georgian leadership according to their recent statements do realize the complexity of the problem, but so far can not do anything about that.

There is one more problem that I would like to turn your attention to. Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union vague borders exist between Russia and other CIS countries. Undoubtedly, it is our common problem that needs to be resolved as soon as possible, as it affects national security interests of not only Russia but many other countries as well. According to our estimates, about million and half illegal immigrants stay now in Russia

and 70 to 80 per cent of them are trying to use Russia as a "springboard" to get to Western Europe. Those people can show up in many countries, including the USA and Canada. We do not oppose immigration as such, however, this feature of globalization should be realized within the framework of legality. We can not rule out a possibility that international terrorist organizations may take advantage of such traffic to export terrorists to various "hot spots".

It is often the case when Russian border guards have to deal with legal export of terrorists into our country. In this respect I can refer to a very revealing incident connected with a flight, which arrived from Dubai to Krasnodar last December. There were more than 40 people on board from different countries at the age varying from 20 to 40 without any luggage and with just 10-20 dollars in their pockets. They alleged they came on a business trip, although the purpose of their arrival to Russia was clearly different.

In general, large-scale migration processes can pose a serious threat to stability and security not only for tranquil Europe but the whole international community as well.

It is no secret that intellectuals come in the first ranks of immigrants. Many Western countries are willingly draining the cheap "human intellect" especially from low-developed countries. However, the facts say that it is the immigrants coming from such environment, having no firm ideology of their own, who can easily be manipulated by terrorist ringleaders and become executors of terrorist attacks as it happened on September the 11th, 2001.

From the standpoint of finance, the illegal immigration has turned into a highly profitable business of late. According to some experts, annual revenues of multinational criminal groups majoring in smuggling illegal immigrants amount to \$ 7 billion worldwide, while in Europe the figure exceeds \$ 1 billion. And there is every reason to believe that part of the funds is spent on organizing new terrorist attacks. For your comparison, the latter figure is comparable with the amount of the financial aid planned to be allocated by the European community to help restoring normal life in Afghanistan.

The other source of revenues for international terrorism is drug trafficking. In this respect, in my view, it is enough to quote terrorist #1 bin Laden: "In the fight against infidels narcotics is the same weapon as an automatic rifle". It should be noted that the narcoaggression against European countries on the part of the Taliban had been growing with every passing year, but many people were reluctant to notice that. Last year alone, more than five tons of drugs were seized at the Tajik-Afghan border, and heroin made up nearly half of it. To draw a comparison, in 1996 Russian border guards confiscated only 2kg of heroin at the Tajik-Afghan border, while in 2000 their catch already amounted to 800kg. Thus, an unprecedented growth in heroin trafficking to the Central Asian countries and then, farther, to Russia and Europe has taken shape in the past years.

Terrorism is becoming a long-term factor having a negative impact on the development of social relations both in Russia and a number of neighbor states. Therefore, the danger of threats related to terrorist groups' activities would not just remain in the near term, but most likely even grow. In the future, should countering terrorist groups' activities be relaxed, there is a danger they unite with the aim of further destabilizing the situation in the crisis regions. It is obvious now that open terrorism, as it was the case with Chechen bandits' invasion of Dagestan or aerial attacks in New York and Washington, takes place on more rare occasions. Present-day terrorism is strongly bonded with drug trafficking, illegal arms trade, money counterfeiting and laundering and even setting up legal trade firms.

A comprehensive analysis of the problem and conditions in which it evolves makes it possible

to come up with a prognosis regarding further increase of aggressiveness, growth of organization and tactical potential as well as professional level of international terrorism on the basis of lessons learned from carrying out large-scale, brazen attacks, improving terrorist special training, employing mercenaries, merger of political terrorist organizations and criminal communities, using newly invented tactics of political confrontation. Slogans involving “struggle for national liberation” theme often serve a propaganda cover for terrorist attacks.

It should be noted that consequences of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington have brought about the establishment of a new style in relationships between many countries of the world. Everybody has realized where the real threat to security of many states comes from today, what adversary is to be primarily dealt with.

Russia’s position on the issue of necessity to combat international terrorism with all its variations was clearly defined by Russian President Vladimir Putin at the summit meeting in the US last November – terrorism must be eliminated everywhere and in all its manifestations.

As of today, adequate use of military force is the main method of countering manifestations of international terrorism. That is why Russia has openly and directly supported the international anti-terrorist campaign and considers the destruction of terrorists infrastructure installations in the territory of Afghanistan, cutting off cash flows and crushing their financial networks and dummy firms to be well-grounded and legitimate.

It is the comprehensive and consolidated support on the part of the civilized states that has become an important factor to determine the success of the anti-terrorist operation in Afghanistan. On its part, Russia has always been supporting and will continue to support forces of the anti-Taliban coalition in the struggle for establishing a democratic regime in Afghanistan.

It should be pointed out that while chasing and destroying terrorists and their patrons proper measures are to be taken to eradicate the deep roots of terrorism, among which the hot beds of international conflicts in the Middle East, the Balkans, Somalia, Asian and Caucasian region, top the list; that is, there are more and more countries in which the lack of rule dominates or formerly the so-called “failed states” exist, which in reality don’t control the whole or part of their territories. Such vacuum is being filled instantly by terrorists.

However, any actions taken by the states and international organizations against terrorists, including the use of force, should base on norms and principles of the international law, be adequate to the existing threats.

After all, combating international terrorism by military force alone cannot be totally effective. In the war against international terrorism it is impossible to achieve an absolute victory using only the military force.

That is the reason why Russia along with other states has intensified its search for non-military ways for continuous elimination of international terrorism nourishing environment. Based on danger, which terrorism poses to each sovereign state and the world community as a whole, and to ensure required effectiveness in fighting international terrorism it is necessary to exercise a purposeful influence by all state and non-governmental institutions on the set of factors generating terrorism and favoring its wide spread. It is for the sake of achieving these very ends that the President of the Russian Federation signed on January the 10th the Decree on Measures to Ensure the Implementation of Resolution 1373 by the UN Security Council of

September the 28th, 2001, which prescribes all federal executive bodies of Russia to take immediately all measures to prevent terrorist attacks. In the first place it concerns the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Interior and Foreign Affairs of Russia which deal with immigration matters.

To our regret, till the present time the international community, because of different reasons, has failed to elaborate a generally recognized legal definition of international terrorism. As you may know, it complicates the introduction of an international legal basis for agreement framework in order to effectively counter the threat on a collective basis.

The reason for such a situation to exist is multiple forms of manifestation and a complex structure of that kind of criminal activity. Subjective reasons may also be accounted for that. A number of states are reluctant to bind themselves with a firm formula, capable of becoming an obstacle to supporting terrorism that manifests itself in a way concealed from both the world community and own people and using it as a means to achieve politically advantageous aims. In such situations the state support of terrorism is covered up with big declarations inconsistent with concrete deeds.

What is of our greatest concern today, it is the existence till the present time of double political standards with regard to separatism, religious extremism and fanaticism. If those who blow up apartment houses in Moscow and Buinaks are declared freedom fighters while in other countries such persons are referred to as terrorists one cannot even think of forging a united anti-terrorist front. For, they are all criminals and our attitudes to them must be the same.

It is common knowledge that it is easier to prevent a disease than to cure it. And only promoting and building up international cooperation on the basis of principles and norms of the international law, the UN Charter included, can effectively deal with such a phenomenon as international terrorism. Proceeding from the premise, it is extremely important to ensure the participation of all states in universal antiterrorist conventions.

And here, defense establishments of the world community countries can be assigned a mission of accomplishing a broad range of strategic tasks in countering international terrorism.

One can identify the following main tasks:

- Assessing information in terms of status, dynamics and trends in spreading international terrorism;
- Making recommendations to heads of states of the world community on areas of cooperation to be further promoted in this domain;
- Participating in shaping and developing an effective system to expose, warn of and prevent terrorist attacks which would be abreast of existing situation and trends of terrorism evolution;
- Coordinating joint efforts to prevent terrorist attacks at nuclear installations and attacks using WMD;
- Pooling resources to carry out operations aimed at eliminating existing terrorist organizations and outlawed armed groups, intercepting and cutting off illegal arms, munitions, fissile and highly toxic materials trade channels;

In conclusion, I would like to point out that the joint effort by defense establishments of the world community countries has already been made so that our intentions are being translated into practical steps. It stands to reason that on our way of joint actions we will encounter other

serious obstacles and barriers. However, it is only the joint effort that can yield real fruit, which would enable us to establish an effective system of defense security for each state and the world community as a whole.

The Russian Federation will spare no effort in order to have in place such an architecture of European and global security when every individual would feel fully protected from the threats that in the end bring trouble and sufferings to his or her home.

I hope the Conference will make a remarkable contribution to further development of joint techniques and methods the civilized community countries can use in the struggle against international terrorism.

Thank you !